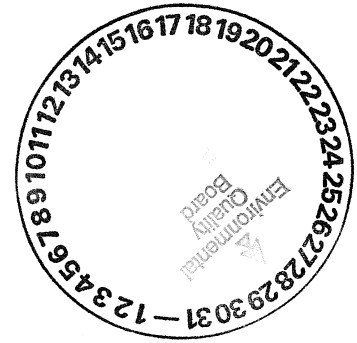


March 11, 2005

Honorable Judge Allan W. Klein
Office of Administrative Hearings
100 Washington Square, Suite 1700
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2138



RE: Comments on the 345 kV transmission-lines in Rock Co.

Dear Judge Klein,

I was at the Xcel Energy March 3, 2005, 2:00 p.m. hearing in Luverne Mn. During the hearing I gave some testimony as to why I felt that the north route should be chosen. After hearing other testimony that day and thinking about it for several days I feel I need to respond some more. There are some issues that make it very clear that the north route should be chosen.

- 1- Xcel Energy should not be allowed to burden more land owners by putting up another high-voltage transmission line parallel to an existing line several miles to the north. If the south route was chosen the north line does not get dismantled, which in effect will inconvenience more land owners. The existing line has the capability to be upgraded. By having Xcel Energy put the new line on the old site using new single poles, all existing land owners would be freed from the inconvenience of having the two H poles. An over all view of this would also have less new poles per mile, making all landowners around the existing line more receptive to the project, and this also would give Xcel Energy a much better relationship with the landowners.
- 2- Over the last ten years the Federal government has been working hard to beautify our interstate freeways. With this in mind Xcel Energy wants to run 40 plus miles of continuous poles along the outer edge of Interstate 90. Certainly, this is not what vacationers and travelers want to view when they are passing through our great state of Minnesota.
- 3- Our economy in rural Minnesota is struggling, and as I mentioned at the hearing, Luverne was fortunate enough to be accepted into the Minnesota JOBZ program. When new development and industry comes to a city, they build around the interstate and city junctions. All the property to the south and north of this junction is in the JOBZ zone. The city of Luverne just finished a two year comprehensive plan study, and in this study it was determined that this area should be used for commercial development. Allowing Xcel Energy to route the high-voltage transmission line through this area will put a huge negative impact on the development and value of this property. I personally own some of this property and have spent a lot of time and money to get this into a development stage. Again, I want to emphasize this line puts a huge obstruction to my future


plans and the economic growth of rural Minnesota. Luverne is not the only city in this situation; there are several other cities along the I-90 corridor that will be restricted in the same manner if the south route is chosen. This south high-voltage transmission line proposal will be a huge set back for future development of Interstate-90 communities.

- 4- Xcel Energy is in the business to make money, and they say using the north route is going to cost them more. I believe this extra cost is a very small piece of the total project. Xcel Energy is a huge company and is showing no consideration as to who they might hurt in their steps of growth.

So with these issues in mind, I am asking you to please tell Xcel Energy that the north line is the only feasible route to use.

I am also going to send a copy of this to John Wachtler at the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.


Ronald Fick
1159 101st Street
Luverne, MN 56156

cc: John Wachtler